

A meeting of the Parish Council was held at **Read & Simonstone Village Hall, 6 East View, Read, BB12 7PS on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025 at 7.00p.m.**

**Present:** Chairman: Councillor R Hanson  
Councillors: Pollard, Greenhough, McKelvey, Hacking, & Neary

**In attendance:** Clerk A Haines, Cllr Malcolm Peplow

2 members of the public attended (Martin Crabtree and Louise).

Chair Richard Hanson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Anderson & Cllr A Hanson

**2. Declarations of Councillors' Interest and dispensations**

1.1. **To receive declarations of interest from Councillors *on items on the agenda***

None

1.2. **To receive requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any)**

None

1.3. **To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate**

None

**3. To approve the minutes of the previous parish council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

Approved (proposed Cllr R Hanson, seconded Cllr Hacking)

**4. Matters arising from the above minutes not on the agenda**

None

**5. Public participation**

None

**6. Borough Councillor's Report**

Cllr Peplow gave an overview, full report in appendix I.

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT TO THE MEETING OF READ PARISH COUNCIL ON 2ND JULY 2025, overview:**

- Read Parish Council's application for £5000 to install EV chargers at the village car park will proceed to full application in August, alongside Read Village Hall's application for £100,000+ for accessible WC. Malcolm will update on further progress.
- Meadowview estate plight – Malcolm has arranged a meeting with all parties involved, all have agreed to take part with the exception of Onward Housing who have yet to respond.
- Malcom has raised road safety concerns in the area, particularly on Whin's Lane.
- Uncertainty remains over reorganisation of town and parish councils.
- Devil's Elbow Road has been partially resurfaced.

Councillor Malcolm Peplow

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

**7. Clerk's Report:**

7.1. Busy month: taken over as Responsible Financial Officer for Read Parish Council.

7.2. Participated in a clerks training course and met with Mike Hill, clerk from Simonstone Parish Council and Longridge Town Council to go over the practicalities of the clerks role and responsible finance officer.

- 7.3. Working on revamping the website following our spring clean meeting earlier in the month.
- 7.4. New funding opportunities: Read Environment Group are short of volunteers to run a Naturesave-funded community allotment, although two people are interested (Cllr Neary mentioned this may not be the case). The deadline for the Naturesave £5000 grant is the 15<sup>th</sup> July. Clerk to liaise with school on community allotment/bird feeder projects and apply for full funding.

**8. Steel pole installation by IXWireless/Opus in Read:** This is classed as essential infrastructure to replace landlines and will be going ahead. Previous meetings with IXWireless have been positive, with the company assuring that it will inform residents prior to work being carried out and are open to queries. Clerk to contact IXWireless once Cllr R Hanson passes on contact details in relation to previous confirmation that they will install a pole at the cricket Club as they carry out work in the village, which can then also be used to mount CCTV camera.

**9. Reports from external meetings:**

- 9.1. Parish Council Liaison Meeting (attended by Cllr Greenhough and Cllr Hacking) – discussed digital changeover and need to liaise with elderly. Scheme will be completed by Jan 2027, those living alone will still be able to make emergency calls through pendants using a battery pack on landlines that will operate in emergency (e.g. power cut). Also discussed success of Read Village Hall and Read Parish Council in 1<sup>st</sup> stage of Ribble Valley Shared Prosperity Fund, and devolution (as discussed in Cllr Peplow's report).
- 9.2. **Police report:** This month there have been 2 x assaults, both including juveniles, and 1 is a known offender, 3 x road-related offences (1 x no ins, 1 x speeding/no ins, 1 x drink driver), 1 x RTC damage only and 2 x theft (1 x theft of patio furniture and 1 x make off without payment of fuel).

**10. Playground report:**

- 10.1. Playground is being used, children are happy.
- 10.2. Cllr R Hanson hasn't put woodchip around bench yet.
- 10.3. The community café would like to donate some money (a few hundred pounds) to the playground. Proposed that this is used to buy a child-friendly bin, and Cllr Pollard to approach Cricket Club to see if this could be emptied in their skip over the summer months following events at the club over weekends (proposed Cllr Pollard, seconded Cllr R Hanson).
- 10.4. It has been mentioned by a resident how busy the playground is, with concerns raised over children running out in front of traffic.

**11. Allotment Management Committee report:**

- 11.1. 12 improvement letters have been sent out – record high number. All have received responses.
- 11.2. 2 tenants are giving up their allotments and it has been suggested that these should be split into smaller plots, which will open up around 10 vacant plots to reduce waiting list. Cllr Neary will speak to the lengthsmen about going forward with this.
- 11.3. There is a further vacant plot due to the tenant passing away.
- 11.4. Cllrs Anderson, Neary and McKelvey have further dismantled sheds and removed overgrown conifers from plots, and a new skip will be ordered to remove these next week.

**12. Decision Items:**

- 12.1. **Levelling hump in playground:** Cllr R Hanson has contacted Groundwork Direct for a quote to level the hump and improve the path into the area. Once quote received Cllr Hanson will acquire 2 more quotes and report back at next meeting.

**11.2 Back Street/Fort Street lights:** Clerk to email PCOS Katie Ferguson to ask her opinion on using PCC funding to prevent violence against women/girls to install lighting on these streets

and also CCTV around cricket club car park. If given the green light, clerk to put in a bid for funding.

**11.3 Plaques/signage for playground, car park and allotments:**

- Cllr Neary to get quote for a postcard-sized plaque for planter reading “this plaque commemorates the 80<sup>th</sup> VE Day and stands in place of the Read Village phone box”. Plaque to contain silhouette of soldiers. Invoice to be sent to clerk in order to obtain funds from RV in Bloom grant.
- Cllr R Hanson and Cllr Neary to discuss signage requirements for allotments, playing field (dogs on lead) playground (sign to commemorate Mr Joe Summersgill and provide rules) and car park.

**11.4 Update on Facebook page/email addresses:** Clerk has not managed to get administration rights for Facebook page as yet, and will contact previous clerk Graham Meloy to request these. If unsuccessful, clerk to look at setting up new Facebook page. Barrie Tyrer is in the process of setting up new bespoke email addresses for councillors.

**11.5 Update on website:** Clerk has been working with Barrie Tyrer following spring clean meeting to update all information on website. Clerk to update photos for playground and allotments, and add the new tenancy agreement to the page.

**11.6 Updating policies on website:** The policies on the website are out of date. As a minimum, there should be three principal policies on the website up-to-date: Standing orders, financial regulations and code of conduct. The policy on “financial standing orders” currently on Read Parish Council’s website needs amending to “financial regulations”. Clerk to go over these and compare with Simonstone Parish policies, talk to Mike Hill if necessary and send around to councillors prior to next meeting to discuss updating.

**11.7 Clarification on use of playing fields for events other than training/football matches:** It was agreed that Readstone Football Club should provide details and request permission to use the playing fields for events other than football matches and training by the parish council meeting prior to the event taking place. Cllr Hacking to contact Ben Hill to request the football do this for future events going forward.

**11.8 Consultation options for planning within parish:** Cllr R Hanson outlined how the Parish Council currently respond to planning applications (details on the planning section of website, Cllr R Hanson and Cllr Pollard are on the planning committee and new plans are discussed amongst the parish council and comments are returned to Ribble Valley Planning Team). The Parish Council have recently discussed (May 2025) preferred options for where new homes might go within the parish should we be consulted (see minutes of May 2025 meeting). The Parish Council would prefer Brownfield sites to be utilised wherever possible for the provision of affordable, smaller properties (e.g. flats/bungalows for older residents downsizing) which are in the highest demand. No outcome of any of these discussions has been passed on to the Ribble Valley Borough Council planning department. Read Parish Council has not yet established a link with Simonstone Parish Council to discuss options across both parishes. The safest option within Read would be away from the core of the village to reduce traffic within the village. If a public meeting were to be held, different factions would all want different options, with the result being no houses were wanted in any location.

**11.9 Cutting of triangle of grass at the top of Straits Lane:** This has already been done. Clerk contacted RV to request costings of this going forward but has received no response. Decision: to keep an eye on this going forward and check it continues to be cut.

**11.10 Community café:** Have offered to donate money to playground as discussed in playground report.

**11.11 Suggestions for equipment for playground:** A child friendly bin, as discussed above.

Cllr R Handson and Cllr Neary to ask Andrew Isherwood to carry out an annual inspection of tree health around playground and also the parish gardens to detect safety risks, as children often seen climbing trees. Clerk suggested monkey bars for potential future equipment. Cllr S McKelvey to purchase cable ties to put on top of swing bar to prevent bird fouling on swings.

**11.12 Car Park CCTV camera upgrade:** as discussed under street lighting decision item (11.2), clerk to apply for PCC funding to upgrade CCTV cameras.

**13. Correspondence:** none.

**14. Planning applications and decisions:**

14.1. Holkers Farm, Whins Lane, Read BB12 7RB. Listed Building Consent for repairs and alterations including re-pointing, replacement of windows, removal of modern fireplaces and removal of WC compartment.

14.2. Hammond View 38 George Lane Read BB12 7RH: change of use of land from agricultural to residential to extend the domestic curtilage of the property and associated engineering operations.

**15. Finance and accounts:** Still awaiting approval of additional signatories on UNITY bank account.

**A. Payments:**

Date	Item	Amount
30-Jun-25	Service Charge	£ 6.00
27-Jun-25	HMRC - clerks tax	£ 0.46
27-Jun-25	Isherwood tree services	£ 75.00
27-Jun-25	CLIFTON POLLARD for topsoil	£ 93.96
27-Jun-25	CLIFTON POLLARD for bedding plants	£ 10.50
20-Jun-25	SLCC membership	£ 118.00
19-Jun-25	SLCC clerk training ILCA course	£ 144.00
17-Jun-25	clerk salary	£ 559.55
13-Jun-25	Water bill	£ 94.96
13-Jun-25	Sutcliffe Play - playground refurbishment	£ 5,771.88
10-Jun-25	Gallagher - Insurance	£ 654.28
Total		£ 7,528.59

**B. Receipts:**

Date	Item	Amount
30-Jun-25	Read Cricket and Bowls Club	£60.00
30-Jun-25	Credit interest on Unity savings account	310.56
Total		£370.56

**C. Bank Accounts:**

Unity Current:	1445.34
Unity Savings:	52371.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>£53,816.38</b>
Last month balance	60974.41
Difference from previous month	£7,158.03

## **16. Items for the next agenda:**

- 16.1. Levelling hump in playground
- 16.2. Back street/Fort street lighting and CCTV funding update
- 16.3. CCTV pole installation
- 16.4. Plaques and signage for playground, car park and allotments
- 16.5. Website policy updates
- 16.6. Annual tree inspection
- 16.7. Hedge cutting by playing field
- 16.8. Playground bin

Please send items for next agenda to clerk 10 days before next meeting.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm.

The Next Meeting will take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 at 7pm at the Village Hall.

## Appendix I

### **BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT TO READ PARISH COUNCIL ON 2 JULY 2025.**

I would like to start with an update on Ribble Valley Shared Prosperity and Jubilee Fund Bids.

I am very pleased to confirm that Expression of Interest (EOI) online forms were submitted from organisations in the Read Parish area as follows:

Read and Simonstone Village Hall (Registered Charity) (Scheme 1) – Provide accessible WC - £107,641 (officer's comment 'maximum grant is £100,000')  
Officer's recommendation is to move this to full application stage.

Read and Simonstone Village Hall (Registered Charity) (Scheme 2) – accessible route from car park to the main door - £27,727 (officer's comment 'two schemes submitted with the other recommended')  
Officer's recommendation is NOT to move this to full application stage.

Read Parish Council (Parish/Town/District Councils) install EV charge points at Read village car park - £5,000  
Officer's recommendation is to move this to full application stage.

At Policy and Finance Committee on 17 June, it was decided that all EOI's will be considered first by the appropriate working group of which I am a member. This working group will recommend which EOI's should proceed to a full application, and I will be making a strong case for all three schemes above to do so and for the cap of £100,000 for Village Hall Scheme 1 to be lifted. The P+F Committee will then decide, and this decision must be agreed by Full Council. I will update you as soon as possible on progress.

Next is an update on my efforts to organise a multi-agency meeting to discuss the plight of residents on Meadow View in Read who most or all of you will know were left with an incomplete road and footpaths when the developer became insolvent prior to completion of the estate. All parties mentioned in my previous report have agreed to attend a future meeting to be arranged including this Parish except for Onward Homes from whom I still await a response. I have requested Rachel Stott in Ribble Valley Borough Council to request them to attend as they are one of the Borough's social housing providers. I remain hopeful of their involvement in the meeting and have updated the resident's Management Company representative accordingly.

I spoke to Neil Stevens, a senior LCC Highways officer after a private meeting last week regarding the HARP project, about ongoing road safety concerns in Read and Simonstone including on Whins Lane in Read between Trapp Lane and Meadow View where the completely inappropriate national speed limit of 60mph is still in use. I will email him directly about this issue as he invited me to. I will keep County Councillor Ged Mirfin in the loop and hope that he supports my requests as a member of the County Council's Reform UK-led administration.

Finally, the Chief Executive of Ribble Valley Borough Council received and shared an Interim Plan Feedback letter on local government reorganisation from Jim McMahon, Government Minister dated 15 May 2025. I have extracted the section on Parish and Town Councils in italics below:

### *3. Town and parish councils*

*You asked for our view on how town and parish councils might change following reorganisation. We recognise the value that parish councils offer to their local communities and continue to support the work they do; but this is not a replacement for local authorities hardwiring local community engagement into their own structures, preferably through neighbourhood Area Committees. Parish councils are independent institutions and are not a substitute for meaningful community engagement and neighbourhood working by a local authority. Areas considering new parish councils should think carefully about the distinct role they play and how they might be funded, to avoid putting further pressure on local authority finances and/or new burdens on the taxpayer. In your final proposal(s), we would welcome further information on neighbourhood-based governance, the impact on parish councils, and the role of neighbourhood Area Committees.*

This is clearly open to interpretation and the sooner we all get greater clarity on how reorganisation affects Parish Councils and neighbourhood level democracy the better. We have yet to hear the official view that Reform UK-led LCC is going to take on local government reorganisation including the issue of an elected Mayor.

Councillor Malcolm Peplow

2 July 2025